



CITIZEN SUMMIT III: REAL CHALLENGES, REAL CHOICES



Mayor Anthony A. Williams

Dear Citizen,

Four years ago, 3,000 residents of the District of Columbia came together at the first Citizen Summit to launch an exciting and innovative process called Neighborhood Action. At the Summit, citizens helped set the District's priorities for the city budget and strategic plan. Two years later, another 3,500 residents joined me at Citizen Summit II to revisit the city's priorities. We have achieved much in the past few years, but we still have a long way to go before reaching our full potential as a city.

I'm thrilled to invite residents to join me again this year for Citizen Summit III in our new Washington Convention Center. Citizen Summit III is an opportunity for the public to address the real challenges that face the District of Columbia and make real choices about the future of our city.

Together, we will look to the future and envision the kind of place we want our city to be. We will also discuss the difficult trade-offs that confront us today as we work to improve our educational system, increase the safety of our neighborhoods, and expand opportunity for all.

The Citizen Summit is America's largest ongoing town hall meeting – a time when our community can come together to talk about the most important issues that impact our lives.

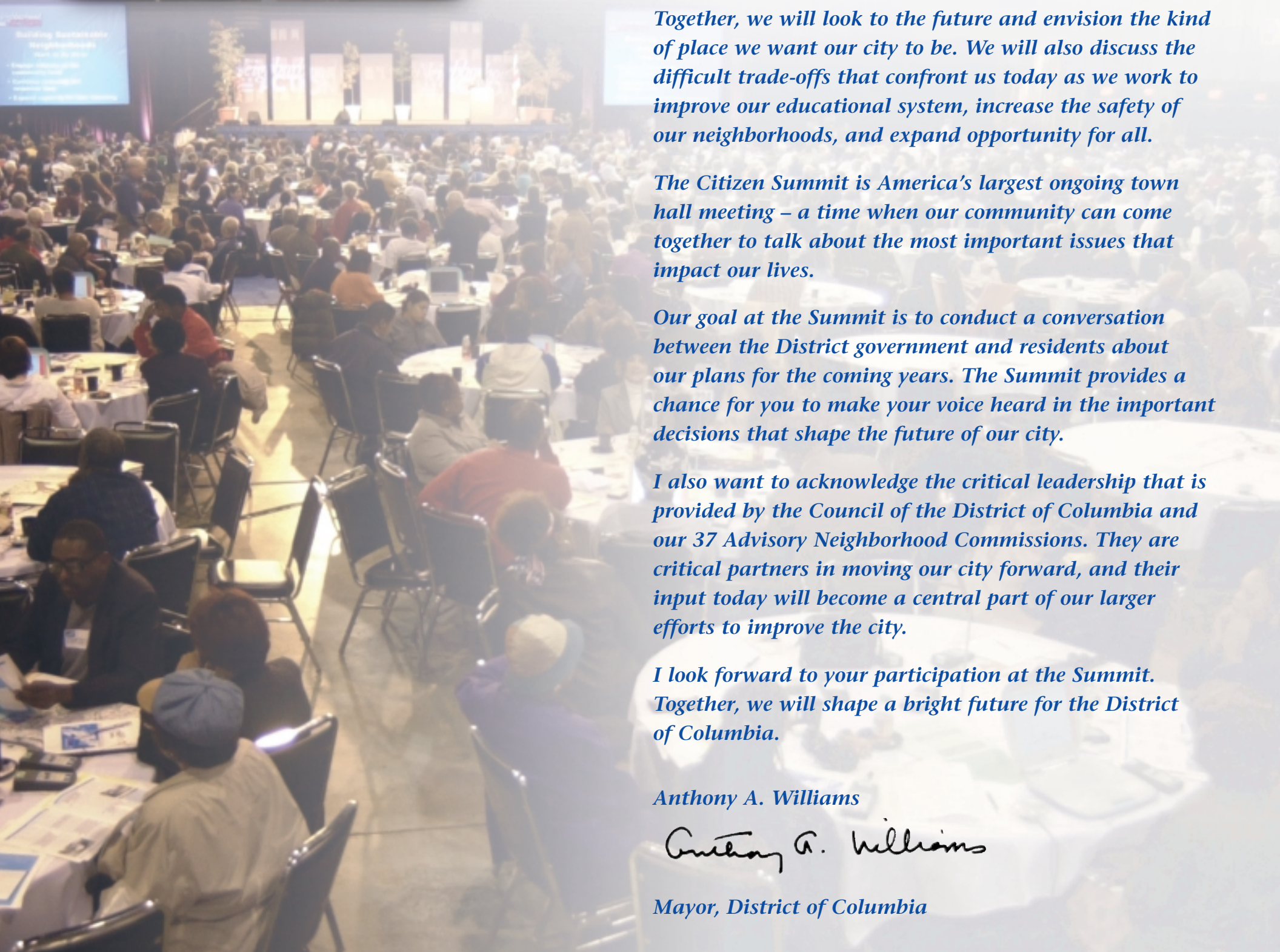
Our goal at the Summit is to conduct a conversation between the District government and residents about our plans for the coming years. The Summit provides a chance for you to make your voice heard in the important decisions that shape the future of our city.

I also want to acknowledge the critical leadership that is provided by the Council of the District of Columbia and our 37 Advisory Neighborhood Commissions. They are critical partners in moving our city forward, and their input today will become a central part of our larger efforts to improve the city.

I look forward to your participation at the Summit. Together, we will shape a bright future for the District of Columbia.

Anthony A. Williams

Mayor, District of Columbia

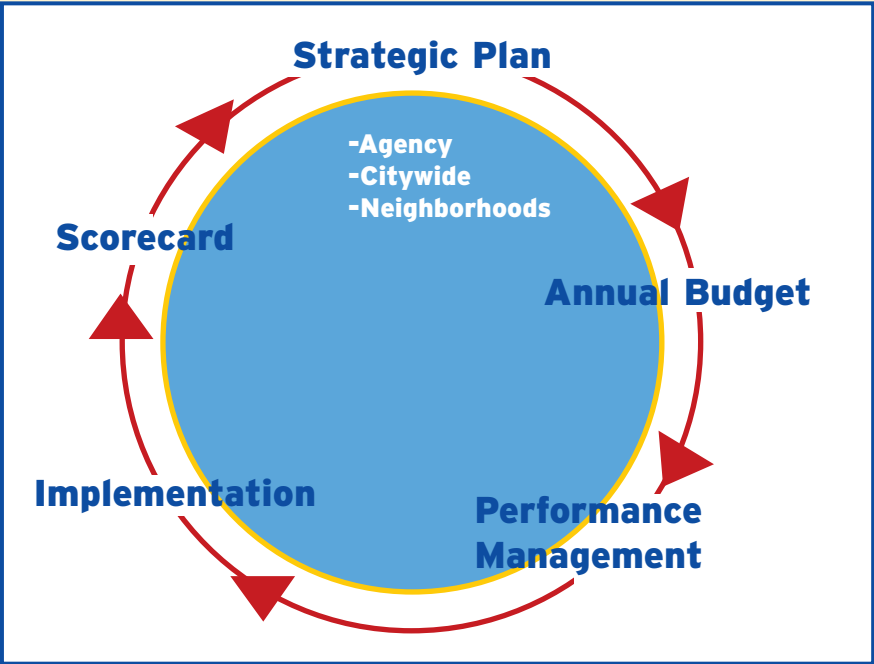


What is Neighborhood Action?

Neighborhood Action seeks to engage the community in setting priorities for the District of Columbia. To do so, Neighborhood Action has initiated a new process that engages District residents in creating the city’s budget and strategic plan, and holds the government accountable for responding.

Every two years, people from every walk of life come together to set priorities for the city at the Citizen Summit. Thousands of citizens spend a day together discussing policy proposals developed by Mayor Williams and provide feedback to him on what they have discussed. A second, smaller forum follows the Citizen Summit, so that Mayor Williams can share with the public how their voices affected his proposals and to obtain more feedback.

Public priorities articulated through this process shape the city’s budget and strategic plan. Once the city’s budget has been adopted, input from the Citizen Summit is used to set goals for city employees and hold them accountable for implementing the community’s priorities. Public scorecards are then developed, so that the public can check up on the District government and evaluate how well it is responding to their concerns. (www.dc.gov/mayor/scorecards/Index.shtm)



Over the course of the past four years, Neighborhood Action has engaged more than 10,000 residents of the District in the governance of the city. In addition to Citizen Summits that are held every two years, Neighborhood Action has convened neighborhood planning meetings across the city, as well as a Youth Summit to set an agenda for addressing the needs of the city’s young people.



What Will Happen at Citizen Summit III?

As we look to the future, it is important that we consider both long-term and short-term community goals. At Citizen Summit III, citizens and government leaders will come together to develop a long-range vision for what the District should look like in the future. They will also address the difficult choices to be made in the city’s strategic plan and budget for the next fiscal year.

Vision for the Future

For the first time in over 50 years, the District has the opportunity to plan for long-term growth, as the city is experiencing an unprecedented level of development and is no longer losing population. Now is the time to develop a vision that expresses our hopes and aspirations, outlines how we should focus growth, and addresses our key challenges head on.

Draft ideas for a vision will be presented at Citizen Summit III. This includes strategies for addressing some of our city’s challenges, such as housing affordability, employment opportunities and strengthening neighborhoods. To get to this point, the DC Office of Planning reviewed existing initiatives, assessed existing conditions, analyzed future growth trends, and commissioned eight policy papers on the state of the city.

Once a vision is developed, it will guide the revision of the city’s Comprehensive Plan, the legal document that contains policies for how and where new development will take place. The District’s current Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1984 and doesn’t fully reflect today’s world and tomorrow’s challenges. The Comprehensive Plan guides the District’s land-use decisions – from the city as a whole down to each neighborhood block. It addresses a wide range of issues, including economic development, environmental protection, housing and transportation.

Priorities for Today

Participants at Citizen Summit III will consider policies and programs that address three of the most important challenges facing the city:

- Education
- Public safety
- Opportunity for all (including access to health care, jobs and housing)

Our task today will be to evaluate options for addressing these challenges and determine priorities for the future, so that the city can target its resources towards specific programs. When creating the city’s strategic plan and budget, it is necessary to evaluate the range of options that are available and target resources based on the most important priorities for the community. This process of setting priorities becomes substantially more important in times of budget cuts and shortfalls (see page 3).

The city will continue to address priorities outside of these issues, but will look to feedback from Citizen Summit III participants to determine how to expand its effort in addressing these three important areas.



Real Challenges, Real Choices

As we discuss our vision for the future of the city and consider policy options for improving Education, Public Safety, and Opportunities for All in the District, it will be important to consider the implications of how the city has grown over the years, as well as how reduced budgets impact opportunities for new programs in the next year.

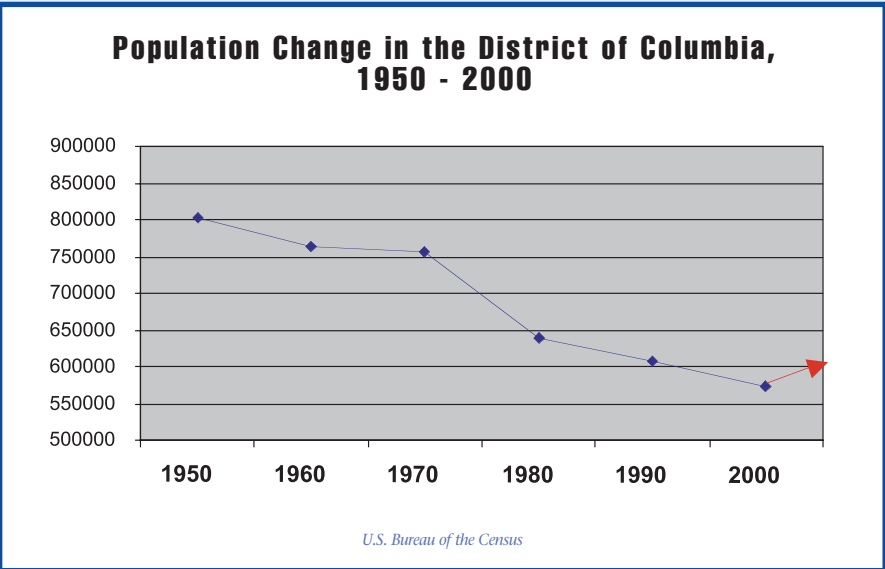
Growth Challenges

After five decades of population decline, the District is no longer losing population. As the chart indicates, the District's population declined from 800,000 in 1950 to 572,000 in 2000. Since 2000, the population has stabilized, and there are strong indicators that it is now increasing. In mid-2003, there were 8,500 units of housing under construction. Another 12,000 units were planned or proposed.

Our job base is also growing. The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments projects that the city will add 150,000 new jobs between 2000 and 2030. This translates into new offices, hotels, retail stores, and commercial development. The increase in jobs and housing also means that our city will need to deal with more traffic, air and water quality issues, and growing demand for city services. To keep our city a

great place to live, work, and visit, we will need to effectively manage our growth.

The District of Columbia has a 200-year tradition of great planning and visionary thinking. As we begin to grow again, we have an opportunity to continue that tradition. Our challenge is to manage growth in a way that protects the things we cherish about our city, respects our values, and helps us achieve our ideals for the future. Another challenge is to successfully attract the middle class back to our city, including families and singles.



Budget Challenges

Virtually every city, every county, and every state in America is facing a major budget crunch due to the nation's economic downturn. This means that we don't have enough resources to keep some of our current commitments, let alone add new ones. Our community needs to make tough choices.

To avoid cutting key services or raising taxes, the city has worked to eliminate waste and reduce spending on low priorities, and shift those dollars to support higher priorities. Over the past three years, we have made substantial reductions in the District's budget without making major reductions in services. In fiscal year 2003 the District government made operating spending reductions of \$193 million and capital spending was reduced by \$250 million. Substantial reductions in spending will also take place in the 2004 fiscal year.

As the city begins planning for the 2005 fiscal year budget, the District may face continued pressure to reduce public spending. In these difficult times, we must focus on our goals, so that we may continue making progress toward their achievement.

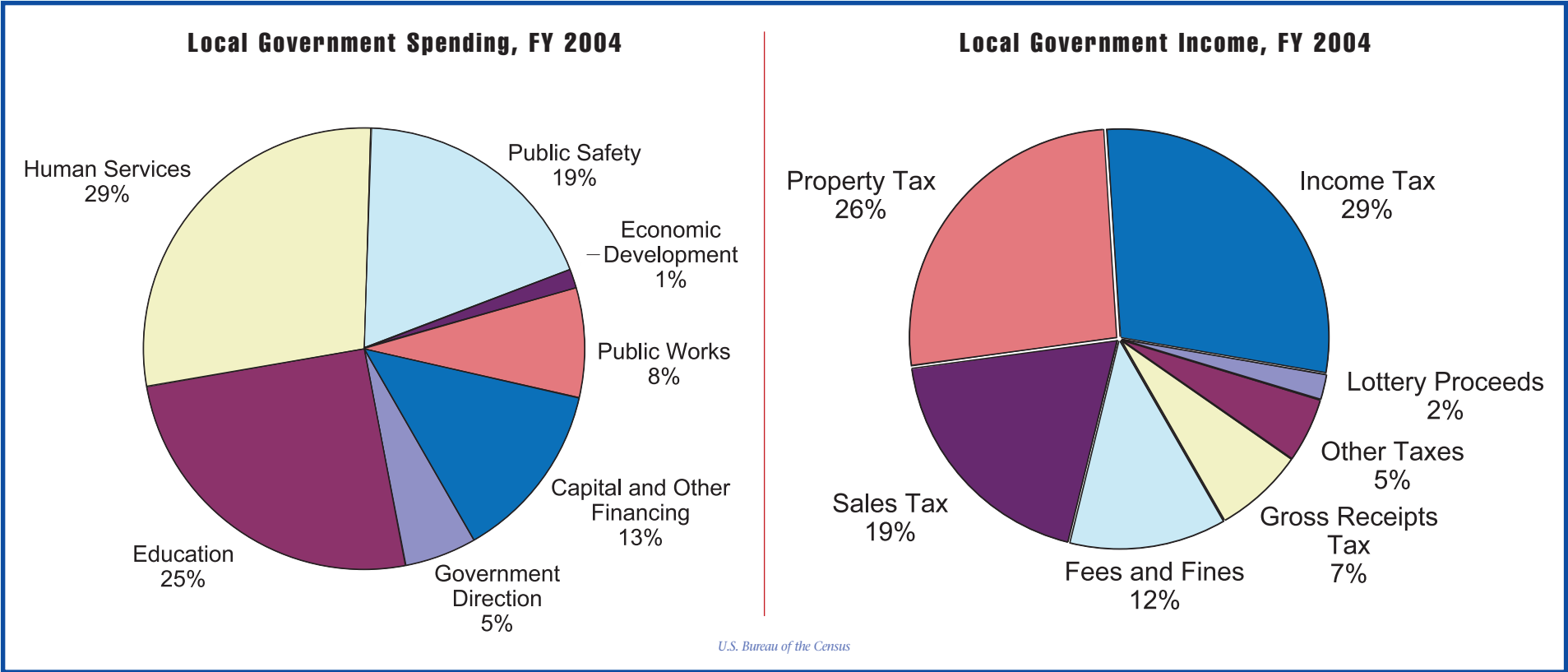
At Citizen Summit III, we won't just talk about what needs to happen to fix education and other areas, we will also talk about what sacrifices we are willing to make in order to make those things happen.

Tradeoffs often will be between two or more strong ideas, where we may find funding for only one. Working together, we need to decide how we can best target our resources.

In order to think about budget tradeoffs it is important to have some information about where they currently go and where budget dollars come from. The two pie charts below explain where the District's funds come from and how that funding is spent.

Education, public safety, and human services make up over 70 percent of the District's expenditures. The remaining amount goes to provide the basic operations of government buildings, rent, streets, garbage disposal, motor vehicle services, and other related services. It is important to note that the major budget cuts made in recent years have focused on these last few areas in order to preserve education, safety, and human services. Further reductions cannot be made without major service disruptions.

As we discuss programs that should be implemented by the city next year, consider how the District's fiscal situation should affect how we think about our priorities.



VISION: GROWING AN INCLUSIVE CITY

Why Do We Need a Vision?

We need a Vision to answer basic questions about the kind of place we want our city to be in the future. We need a Vision to express our shared values and hopes for future generations. The Vision will provide a framework for city plans and programs and will help guide a revision of our Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan is the legal document that contains policies for how and where new development may take place. It will help us make important choices about improvements to our parks, schools, and transportation system.

Where We Are Today

Washington, DC is growing. In the last four years, more than 7,000 new homes and apartments and eight million square feet of office space have been built. The District has also helped finance 12,000 units of housing for low and moderate-income residents. Almost \$25 billion worth of development has recently been completed, is under construction, or is planned. And, we are becoming more diverse and multi-cultural, with people from all over the world choosing to settle in our city.

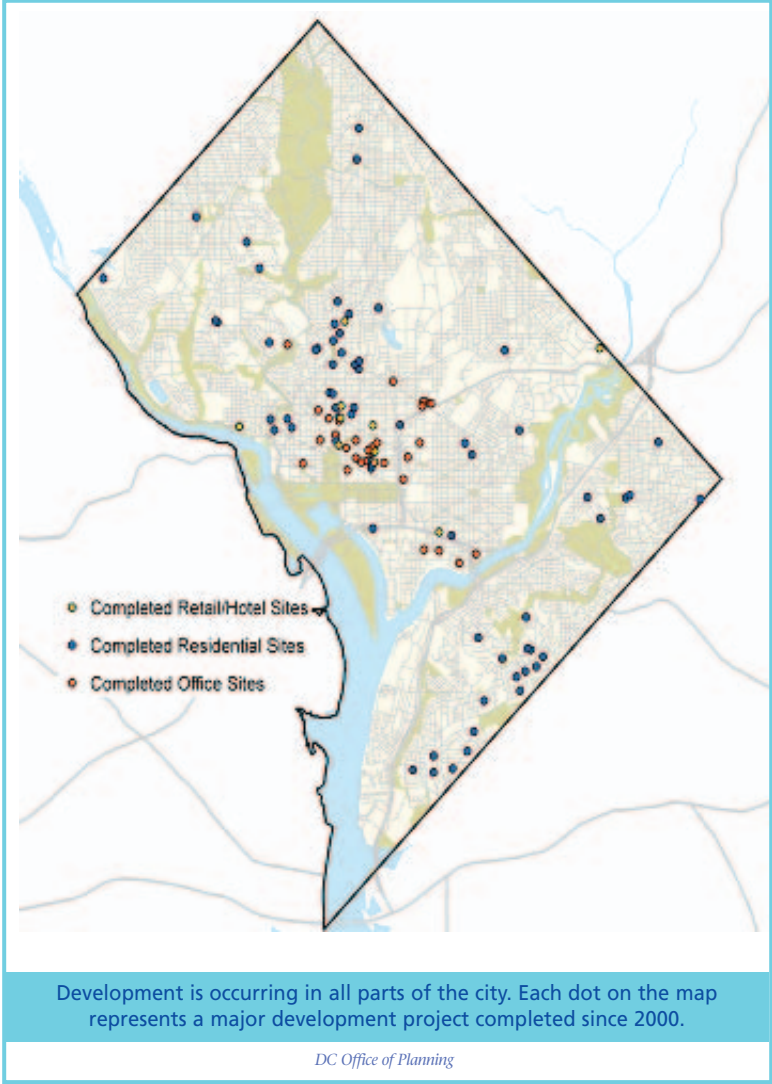
Yet we continue to face a troubling challenge. Today...

- **We have become more divided into rich and poor neighborhoods.** Concentrated poverty in the District increased during the 1990s, while it decreased in most other American cities. If we keep growing this way, this divide could get worse. We can continue on this path, or we can do more to create successful mixed income neighborhoods with a wider range of housing and services that meet the needs of our community.
- **We have become more divided in resident access to education and jobs.** Despite our many universities and our booming economy, many residents still lack access to quality education and decent jobs. We can do more to improve our schools, create new job opportunities, and improve access to jobs for residents.
- **We have become more divided by physical barriers.** Over the years we've invested a lot to connect the suburbs to the District. We need to do more in the future to connect our residents to each other. This means creating stronger physical connections between our neighborhoods, downtown, federal lands, waterfronts, and parks.

The Vision: Growing An Inclusive City

The divisions in our city can be addressed by growing more inclusively. With the right strategies, we can make sure that everyone benefits from the strengths of our city and region. Growing an inclusive city means:

- **Growing the population** by retaining existing residents, attracting 100,000 residents, and providing housing for people of all incomes.
- **Growing family income** by providing jobs and helping residents rise out of poverty.
- **Growing our educational system** so that all children and adults can succeed in life.
- **Growing our neighborhoods** so they include places to live, shop, work, and play.



- **Growing our transportation system** so it provides more options for everyone.
- **Growing our natural setting** to create a greener, healthier city.

Growing an inclusive city is not just about adding people. It's about making the city a better place to live for those who are already here by: (1) **creating successful neighborhoods**, (2) **improving access to education and jobs**, and (3) **connecting the city**.

1) Successful Neighborhoods

The Vision for the District's future should start with our neighborhoods. We have well over 100 great neighborhoods in this city, each with a unique set of strengths and challenges. Strategies for successful neighborhoods include:

Ensuring that each neighborhood has the following basic building blocks:

- A community anchor, such as a school, where citizens can find neighborhood services and a place for community activities.
- A convenient local shopping area.
- A neighborhood park or open space that is safe and well-maintained.
- Easy access to public transportation.
- A healthy environment, with clean air, earth, and water, and trees providing shade and beauty.

Creating a mix of housing in every neighborhood, including:

- A mix of housing types, from detached homes to row houses and apartment buildings.
- Housing at a variety of price levels – ranging from affordable to market rate.
- Housing for renters and for homeowners.
- Housing for a range of household types, including seniors, families with kids, single people, and couples.
- Housing for people with special needs, such as persons with physical disabilities.



A mix of housing types can provide a range of choices for residents.

Achieving this mix will take different strategies for different neighborhoods. In some neighborhoods that are rapidly changing or have high priced housing, affordable housing will be a priority. In other neighborhoods where concentrations of poverty exist, housing for middle-income singles and families will be encouraged.

Strengthening each neighborhood's identity.

What makes Columbia Heights different from Mount Pleasant? How do you know when you're in Deanwood, Brightwood, or Crestwood? Giving our neighborhoods more identity is about improving the places and spaces that make each one unique. This could mean creating a new plaza, improving or creating a strong neighborhood park or open space, restoring a row of historic buildings or helping long-time small businesses.

Requiring all neighborhoods to share responsibility.

Every city needs things like halfway houses and foster care homes. But right now, some neighborhoods have more than their fair share.



A well-maintained park is an important building block for a successful neighborhood.

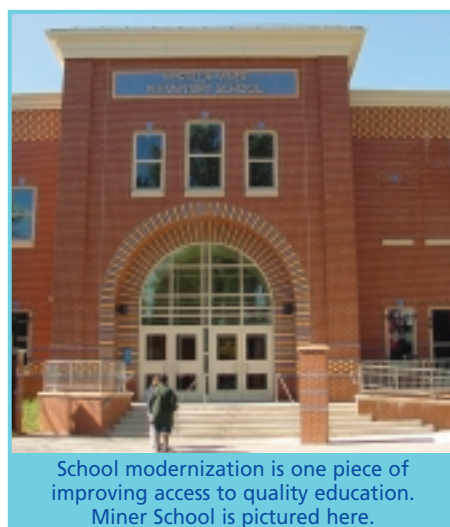
VISION: GROWING AN INCLUSIVE CITY

One idea for the vision is for each neighborhood to have its share of these needed facilities.

To create successful neighborhoods means we need to make real choices about providing a mix of housing types, where we should encourage more density, and how we can achieve shared responsibility.

2) Access to Education and Employment

Education and employment are the basic building blocks for individuals to lead fulfilling and independent lives. Our Vision should aspire to create a continuous pathway of learning from childhood to adulthood.



School modernization is one piece of improving access to quality education. Miner School is pictured here.

For children, it starts with accessible early childcare and quality education. Early childhood care helps children to succeed before they even enter school. Quality education means quality teachers and principals, and requires improving the physical environment with improved or modernized schools.

For teenagers, it's about expanding their educational experience by connecting them with employers in our city. One strategy is to link public, charter, and private high schools to local employers to help students learn valuable skills, learn from new mentors, and have positive job training experiences. This strategy includes apprenticeship programs with trade unions.

For young adults and adults, it's about providing choices for higher education. Adults and graduating high school seniors should have the option of a 4-year college program or a 2-year community college that provides educational and vocational programs linked to our growing employment areas.

For adults, it's about new job training and adult literacy programs.

How can adults find adequate employment or be adequately trained if they can't read or write? Ideas for the vision include new approaches to helping adults overcome the fear and stigma of learning these important skills.



Investing in local shopping districts like this one in Brookland can create jobs and provide goods and services.

As we prepare our citizens to be competitive in tomorrow's job market, we also need to expand job opportunities and link DC residents to new jobs. Long-term strategies are:

Maintaining a competitive edge in the region. This means:

- Bringing retail back to the District and reducing the loss of local sales tax dollars to the suburbs. Ideas for the vision include: improving shopping along neighborhood streets, supporting small businesses, promoting large-scale stores in compatible areas, and reviving the Downtown shopping district.
- Creating new employment areas outside of downtown to provide new jobs close to residents, expand our tax base, and reduce commuting.
- Diversifying downtown by attracting new housing, employment, retail, and entertainment.

Increasing access to jobs in Maryland and Virginia for DC residents. DC residents should be able to tap into the hot job market in the suburbs. This means improving transportation to job centers outside DC and creating new partnerships with large employers in the region.

To create a city where children and adults have equal access to education and employment means we need to make some real choices about physical strategies.

3) Connecting the City

Connecting the city is about bridging the barriers that divide the city and creating common ground for all DC residents. Our Vision should aspire to do this by:

Linking the city to its waterfront and greenways. The District and federal governments have begun to create this link through the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative (AWI). AWI will help clean the Anacostia River, provide new parks and trails, improve the bridges across the river, and build new waterfront neighborhoods. Another opportunity to connect the city is to improve the Fort Circle Parks, an almost complete ring of parks and historic civil war forts near the edges of Washington.

Improving the connections between neighborhoods. Washington's avenues can be improved to strengthen the connections between neighborhoods and to move people around town as well across town. Improving boulevards might mean upgrading bus routes. It might mean adding street trees, landscaping, street furniture, and street light-



Improving access to and across the Anacostia River will help strengthen connections between the east and west sides of the city.

ing. Projects like the proposed downtown circulator and new light rail (streetcar) lines will also help link neighborhoods with one another.

Connecting the city to Downtown. In the future, Downtown will become an even more vibrant neighborhood. Our Vision should include inviting and exciting Downtown civic spaces for DC residents as well as visitors and office workers.

Increasing access between the "federal" city and the rest of the city.

This is about physical changes to federal land, such as developing new parks, housing, and job centers. But it's also about improving the connections between the National Mall and the rest of the city, helping tourists discover the "real" DC, and increasing access to federal jobs and resources by DC residents.

Connecting to the region. We need to promote regional solutions to affordable housing, air quality, and other environmental issues; and to create tax strategies that equalize the regional burden that DC continues to shoulder.

To create a connected city, we need to make choices about how and where we invest our money. This could mean dedicating more funds to the Anacostia Waterfront, to select streets and avenues, and to our parks system.

PROVIDING QUALITY EDUCATION



Education is a critical tool for creating a better future. Our city must provide excellent educational opportunities for residents of every age, beginning in early childhood and continuing through high school, college and into adulthood. In order to provide young people with a quality education, we must do more than improve our schools. Our community must provide the support and services that young people need to come to school ready to learn and to have sufficient opportunities to grow outside of school. We must also provide quality adult educational opportunities to improve literacy and expand job opportunities.

Who Runs the Education System?

The education system in the District is unique. The District of Columbia Public Schools operate under an independent school board and educates about 68,000 children. The Board of Education establishes policies for the DC Public Schools, hires and evaluates the Superintendent and monitors various state-level education functions such as special education, transportation and federal grant disbursement. An additional 414 independent public charter schools educate approximately 12,000 children. These schools are monitored by one of two separate oversight bodies known as chartering authorities.

The Mayor and City Council have a limited role in the management of the education system. The Mayor oversees the State Education Office, which informs education policy, collects data, and performs several other state-level functions. The Mayor appoints four members of the nine-member school board.

The Mayor has also been charged with ensuring that the District's schools comply with the "No Child Left Behind Act," which was passed by Congress in 2002. The Act requires that school districts and individual charter schools collect and report to the public more information about our schools than ever before. High-level targets for student achievement have been set through the process, and the Mayor is responsible for ensuring that schools improve in each of their targeted areas every year.

There is a growing trend in major American cities to increase the accountability of elected leaders over the public schools. Cleveland, Boston, Chicago, and other cities have increased the authority of their mayors and councils over the education system in order to ensure that residents can hold these officials accountable for the progress of reform efforts in the schools.

Several years ago, District residents voted to create a nine-member board with five elected members and four members appointed by the Mayor. Under this governance structure, the schools have shown positive developments, but also some deficiencies in the areas of student performance and financial management.

The Mayor and City Council are legally required to reevaluate the structure of the District's school board in 2004.

What Have We Accomplished So Far?

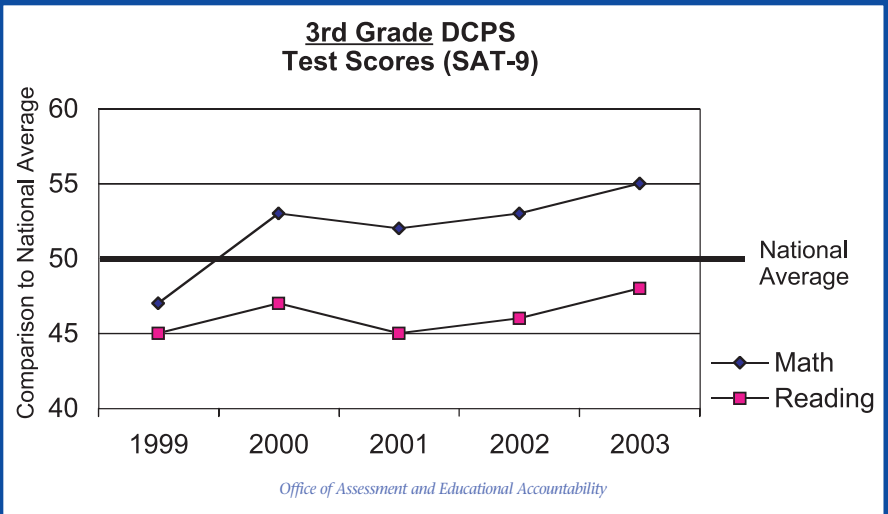
Significant steps have been taken towards improving the District's education system over the past several years. The following programs have been put in place to address the city's educational needs.

- **Transformation Schools:** In 2001, the DC Public Schools launched an initiative to transform the District's lowest performing schools. In 2003, reading and math achievement increased significantly in 83 percent of the "Transformation Schools," and achievement in five of these schools increased to levels above the national average.
- **Early Childhood Care and Education:** The District is ranked second in the nation for percentage of childcare centers that are nationally accredited. In 2002, the District provided financial assistance for 21,947 children in subsidized child-care. In addition, the DC Public Schools have increased their number of Head Start classrooms serving young children by 25 over the past two years. The District will serve approximately 16,000 children in 2003.
- **"Wrap Around" Services:** Programs were started in 15 "Transformation Schools" to provide children with services they need outside the classroom (e.g., health services, counseling) so they can perform better in the classroom. This includes a school-based mental health program that currently provides services to 31 schools and is expanding to five additional Transformation Schools this year. In the past year, the program provided treatment to 3,500 children.
- **Teacher Salaries:** Over the past three years, schools were provided with increased funding to give teachers a 19% pay increase, so that the District can be more competitive in attracting teachers.
- **Access to Higher Education:** The Tuition Assistance Grant Program has provided more than \$44 million in assistance to more than 14,000 residents – allowing them to attend college.
- **Charter Schools:** The District has now established 44 charter schools, providing students and parents with choices in where to attend.
- **Facilities:** The District has invested over a billion dollars to repair school buildings and begin a modernization program.
- **Youth Development:** The District provided entrepreneurship training to 800 youth and created the Mayor's Youth Advisory Council.

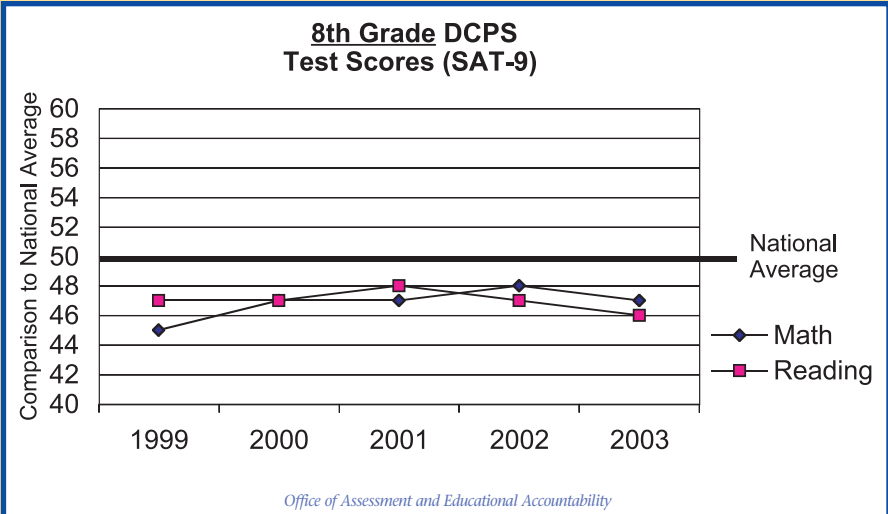


PROVIDING QUALITY EDUCATION

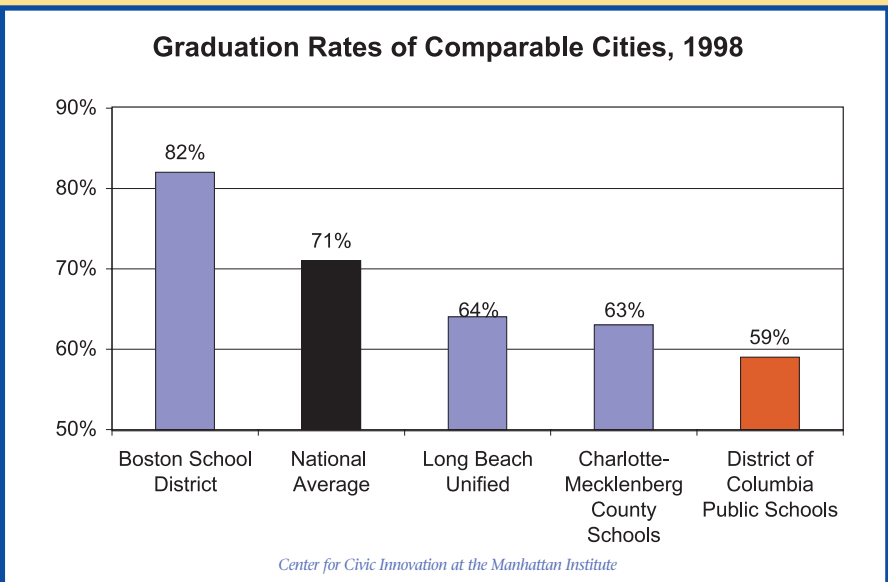
A Statistical Comparison



Reading and math scores have shown steady progress since 2001.



While math scores improved slightly in 2000 and again in 2002, both reading and math scores declined in 2003 and remain below the national average.



Only 59 percent of high school students graduated in 1998—12 percentage points below the national average.

What Can Be Done to Improve the Quality of Education?

While the District government has initiated programs to improve the education system, there is more that can and should be done. In making decisions for next year's budget, the government must make tough choices to determine how to invest its resources. Each of the programs and policies listed below represents a significant option for improving the quality of education for the District's children and youth.

Unfortunately, every new policy or program comes at a cost. For the coming year, the District may invest additional resources, if possible. However, revenues may not be available to do everything that we believe is important. Together, we must evaluate these options for improving the education system in order to ensure that we can target the city's resources towards the most important options.

Option #1: Improve the Quality of Teaching

Why is this option important?

- Research shows that students who are taught by high-quality teachers for three consecutive years perform substantially better than students with low-quality teachers.
- Research also shows that hiring delays can cause large urban school districts to lose substantial numbers of high quality teacher candidates to suburban districts that hire earlier.

Where are we now?

- The District has many excellent and caring teachers, and improved recruitment efforts have caused many highly-qualified candidates to apply for a limited number of openings. Unfortunately, hiring delays have caused many of these candidates to withdraw from the hiring process before they can be offered positions.

What more should we do?

- The District should reform its hiring practices in order to attract the most qualified teachers.
- The school system should create incentives for teachers to provide earlier notification when they are going to leave schools so there will be enough time to find quality replacements.

Option #2: Begin the Education Process in Early Childhood

Why is this option important?

- Studies show that children who begin schooling before kindergarten are more likely to graduate from high school, stay out of trouble, and work in well-paying jobs.
- For example, in Charlotte, NC, "Smart Start" programs educate children up to age 5. One of these programs, Bright Beginnings, currently serves approximately 3,000 students in 157 classrooms and has significantly improved student performance.

Where are we now?

- The District is ranked second in the nation for the percentage of childcare centers that are nationally accredited.
- While the District currently provides early childhood education to residents who earn up to 250% of the poverty level (over 16,000 children in FY2003), there is a waiting list of 1,300 children for early childhood programs.

What more should we do?

- Increase funding to early childhood education in order to provide services to the remaining 1,300 children on the waiting list.
- Create a program to ensure that the quality of all of the city's childcare centers meets national accreditation standards.

Option #3: Provide "Wrap Around" Social Services to Students

Why is this option important?

- In order to focus on learning, children must have their other basic needs met, including nutrition, health, and safety. When those needs are not being met, government programs can attempt to provide support. However, they must do so in a way that is coordinated around the school site instead of being delivered in disconnected offices around the city.



Where are we now?

- The District has created a service delivery system where social services "wrap around" the classroom so that children’s needs are better served, parents and families are given support, and communities are enabled to support children’s education. “Wrap Around” programs consists of an array of services, including family support, mental health services, preventive health care, mentors and tutors, and assistance with family needs, such as referrals for housing or substance abuse.
- While the program has been launched in 15 schools, many more schools have low-income and troubled youth who require these services.

What more should we do?

- Expand the "Wrap Around" programs to 10 additional schools each year.

Option #4: Provide Focused Support for Low-Income Youth Between the Ages of 13-24

Why is this option important?

- Youth at this age become very vulnerable to negative influences around them.
- Research shows that constructive out-of-school programs, particularly community service, can greatly improve academic performance and positive life choices.
- Feedback from District youth repeatedly tells us that they are most interested in increased job opportunities and training.

Where are we now?

- Out-of-school activities serve 6,000 to 10,000 school-aged youth – provided by the public schools, the recreation department and non-profit organizations. However, this is not sufficient to address the needs of the city’s youth.
- Currently, the city provides 5,000 – 6,000 summer jobs each year, 1,100 – 1,800 year-round internships and work experiences, and a variety of recreational programs. However, the city does not provide vocational or alternative trades instruction.

What more should we do?

- Create an additional 500 year-round jobs or 5,000 additional summer jobs for young people.
- Establish an aggressive vocational and trades alternative targeted at the existing and growth industries within the city.

Option #5: Accelerate the Renovation of Schools by Consolidating Underused Facilities

Why is this option important?

- The student population of the DC public schools has decreased significantly over time, so maintaining the current number of school buildings is unnecessary. Funds could be spent better by consolidating facilities and using funds to renovate critically needed buildings.

Where are we now?

- The DC public schools have requested more than \$300 million annually to fund their 10-year modernization plan, which is equivalent to the entire available building renovation budget for the city government.
- Other options are being explored, including the consolidation of under-used schools, and the co-location of selected schools, libraries, and recreation centers.

What more should we do?

- Shift funds from expensive full-scale renovation for a few schools to improve basic facilities for all schools.
- Co-locate government program in the schools to help offset costs
- Consolidate and eliminate unnecessary DCPS facilities
- Lobby for federal contributions and public-private partnerships

What Are Our Goals?

As you evaluate these options, consider how each one will help the District to reach the following targets:

- All children can read by the end of the 3rd grade.
- All children perform at or above grade level in math by the end of the 8th grade.
- The high school graduation rate will meet or exceed the national average.

BE A COMMUNITY HERO!

You can be a community hero by serving as a tutor or mentor for a child. Did you know that mentored children have better school attendance, a better chance of going on to higher education, and a better attitude toward school? Tutoring and mentoring make a difference, and our community is fortunate to have numerous high quality tutoring and mentoring opportunities for volunteers like you.

To learn more information about tutoring or mentoring in DC, and to sign up as a volunteer, please contact the DC Commission on National and Community Service at (202) 727-7925, visit our website: www.cncs.dc.gov; or visit the tutoring and mentoring booths at the Citizen Summit today!



MAKING NEIGHBORHOODS SAFER

For families and communities to thrive, neighborhoods must be safe. Building safer neighborhoods requires that the city provide effective crime prevention, responsive 911 services, and well-developed emergency preparedness plans. While a key factor in crime prevention and response is effective policing, a truly successful public safety strategy must also address the root causes of crime – joblessness, substance abuse, and lack of opportunities and support for young people. The city's approach to building safer neighborhoods targets both better policing and a greater focus on the root causes of crime.

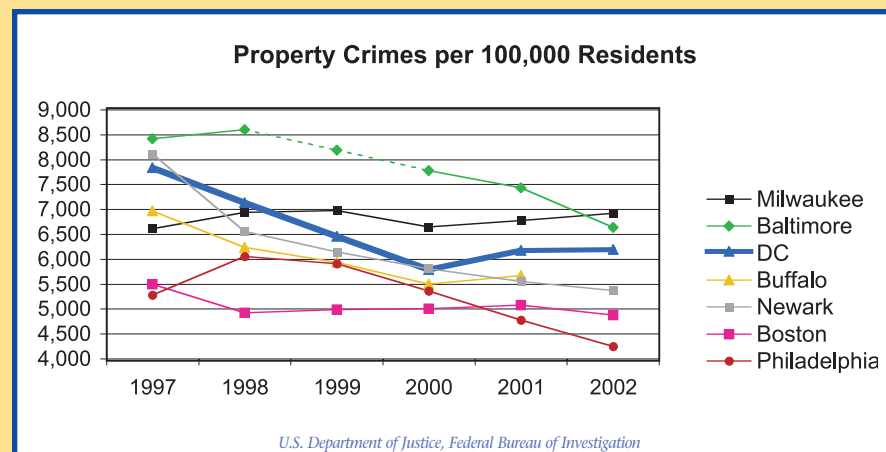


What Have We Accomplished So Far?

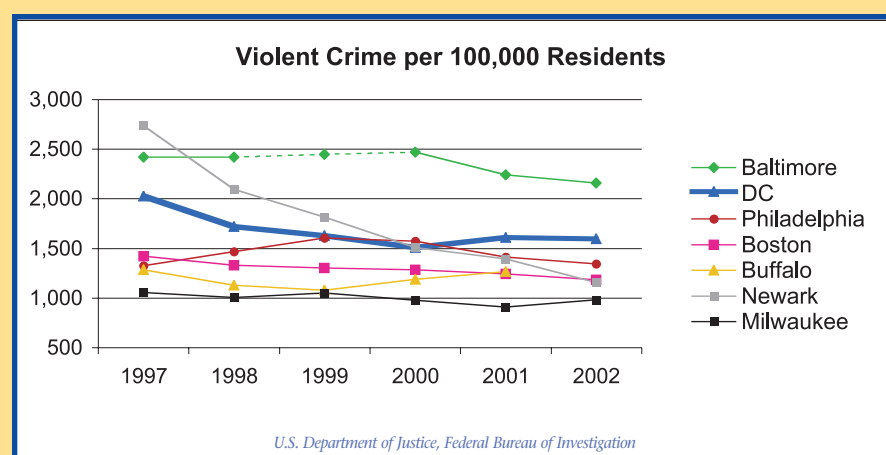
In order to determine where we want to go, it is useful to consider what we have accomplished so far. Over the past several years, significant progress has been made towards building safer neighborhoods. The following programs have been put in place to address the city's public safety needs.

- **Juvenile Justice:** The Family Court was created with judges and magistrates dedicated solely to juvenile and family concerns. A liaison unit has been created to identify and coordinate social services to families involved in the juvenile justice system. A citywide Juvenile Justice Reform Action Plan has been developed and is being implemented.
- **Violent Crime:** Violent crime was reduced by 7 percent from 1997-2002.
- **Police in Neighborhoods:** The number of police assigned to patrol duties was increased from 1,171 to 1,859 over the past five years. Over 100 new officers have been added to the force for this coming year, all of whom will be added to the neighborhoods.
- **Responsiveness:** The police department responded to this summer's increase in crime by targeting enforcement to hot spots and increasing the number of officers available for duty. Initial unofficial results are positive – the homicide rate, which peaked in August, has returned to last year's level by mid-October.
- **911 Call Center:** The 911 call center was upgraded and its workforce fully civilianized – 59 new civilian police were hired to take calls, including additional bilingual call takers.
- **Coordinated Services:** The Office of Neighborhood Services was created, which focuses law enforcement, public works, and human services on "persistent problem areas" identified by residents in all eight wards.
- **Emergency Management:** The District received full national accreditation in emergency management – the first and only city or state in the U.S. to do so.

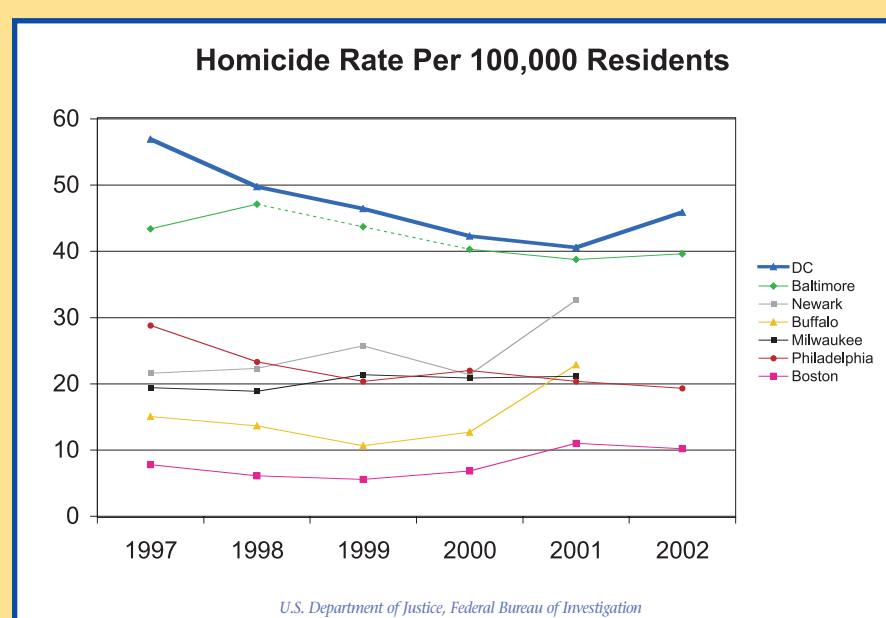
A Statistical Comparison



Property crime has fallen by 21 percent over the past five years and the District is faring better than comparable cities, like Baltimore and Milwaukee. However, the crime rate has risen since 2000.



Violent crime has fallen by seven percent over the past five years and is significantly lower than the rate in Baltimore. However, violent crime has risen since 2000.



The homicide rate has dropped by 13% between 1997 and 2002, more than many comparable cities. While there was an increase in homicides at the start of 2003, as of October that trend has been reversed.

MAKING NEIGHBORHOODS SAFER

What Can Be Done to Make Neighborhoods Safer?

While the District has initiated programs to improve public safety, there is more that can and should be done. In making decisions for next year’s budget, the government must make tough choices to determine how to invest its resources. Each of the programs and policies listed below represents a significant option for improving the safety of the community.

The options may be divided into three categories: prevention, enforcement and rehabilitation. Through prevention, it is often possible to reduce the factors that lead people into crime. However, despite the best prevention efforts, there are individuals who commit serious crimes. When these individuals commit crimes, the law enforcement system must work to capture, incarcerate, rehabilitate, and reintegrate these individuals. Finally, a comprehensive system of rehabilitation is essential to provide an individual with productive options for the future and to reduce the likelihood that an individual will return to crime.

Unfortunately, every new policy or program comes at a cost. For the coming year, the District may invest additional resources, if possible. However, revenues may not be available to do everything that we believe is important. Together, we must evaluate these options for improving public safety in order to ensure that we can target the city’s resources towards the most important options.

Address the Root Causes of Crime

A successful public safety strategy must address the root causes of crime, including unemployment, substance abuse and poor education. Strategies for addressing these needs are discussed elsewhere in this Discussion Guide because their importance extends beyond public safety. Nonetheless, it is important to note that these programs must be part of a larger public safety strategy.

Option #1: Reform the Juvenile Justice System

Why is this option important?

- Young people in the criminal justice system must be assisted in developing positive choices for their future including finding productive work, pursuing education, and treatment or behavioral adjustment.
- Putting juveniles who commit low-level offenses in jail may actually increase the likelihood that they will commit another crime after being released.
- Greater family and community involvement with youth in detention increases the chances of a positive turn-around in the young person’s life.

Where are we now?

- Our current juvenile justice system has an insufficient emphasis on rehabilitation, job training, and reintegrating youth back into society.
- The current system is also under court-ordered monitoring, although basic improvements have been made.
- The Department of Mental Health has placed round-the-clock mental health workers at each truancy center in the city.
- A new state of the art Youth Services Center is scheduled to open next year. In addition to providing assessment and detention services, this facility will have space available for community programming.

What more should we do?

- Reserve youth incarceration for serious offenders.
- Provide lower level offenders with structured supervision and more job and training opportunities.

- Provide skills training and treatment options for youth that are based in the community.
- Return District juveniles from out-of-state facilities.

Option #2: Reduce Neighborhood Blight

Why is this option important?

- Broken streetlights, vacant buildings, abandoned cars and graffiti in neighborhoods often slow the efforts of residents and the police to monitor, prevent and stop crime. For example, abandoned buildings are often used for drug sales and abandoned automobiles are frequently used to stash drugs.

Where are we now?

- Abandoned cars are now reported, tracked and removed, but this process often takes weeks to complete because the District has run out of room to store impounded vehicles.
- Many abandoned houses are being boarded up and converted into occupied housing, but more needs to be done to increase the speed of the process.
- Graffiti is sometimes removed by community members or the District government, but too much graffiti remains, and the problem with graffiti is getting worse.

What more should we do?

- Pass legislation to reduce the time that a car must be held at an impoundment lot, so that abandoned cars can be removed from the streets more quickly.
- Accelerate the boarding-up and conversion of abandoned housing.
- Expand graffiti removal programs to clean up graffiti more quickly.

Option #3: Focus Enforcement and Services on High-Risk Populations and Ex-Offenders to Prevent a Return to Crime

Why is this option important?

- A large volume of crimes are committed by a small population of criminals. By identifying these repeat offenders and focusing enforcement efforts on them, we may reduce crime more effectively.
- One high-risk population is returning ex-offenders. Approximately 2,500 ex-offenders are scheduled to return to the District each year from the federal prison system. By creating a more supportive "re-entry" process, cities can help ex-offenders avoid repeat offenses.

Where are we now?

- Limited police resources are typically focused on the most serious crimes.
- Recent efforts focusing on lower-level offenses have shown promise.
- Currently there are not enough targeted programs to break the cycle of ex-offenders returning to prison in the high-risk populations through enforcement and social support services.



MAKING NEIGHBORHOODS SAFER

What more should we do?

- Work with other justice and social service agencies to more effectively intervene in the lives of the high risk groups, not just by re-arresting them, but by providing opportunities to break the cycle of crime.
- Provide ex-offenders with a "reentry" process that assists them in identifying housing, skill building, jobs, and health care.

Option #4: Add More Officers Citywide with Special Focus on "Hot Spots"

Why is this option important?

- Simply adding more police across the city is not proven to reduce crime, if nothing else is done.
- Redeploying existing officers in response to crime concentrations in neighborhoods must be done quickly in response to trends and must be sustained over time.
- Saturating "hot spots" with police has proven especially successful in Kansas City, and more recently has been adopted in Chicago.

Where are we now?

- District Commanders have been given flexibility to deploy their officers in response to their unique crime patterns.
- A PSA redeployment plan has been developed and is being discussed, with community input, by the Mayor and Council. It will redistribute the number of police in the neighborhoods.
- The District also funded the addition of up to 100 new officers to be hired over the next 12 months on top of the 100 that were hired in fiscal year 2003.
- A large number of officers who are not deployed in the neighborhoods are serving on specialized task forces – like the narcotics unit. Redeploying officers to high crime areas may reduce the number of officers on these units.

What more should we do?

- Building on past investments, focus even more officers on high crime areas.
- Redeploy officers from more secure areas that do not need high levels of patrol or are currently assigned to special task forces, like the narcotics or prostitution units.

Option #5: Increase Enforcement of Low-Level Crimes

Why is this option important?

- By increasing enforcement of low-level crimes, such as graffiti, vandalism, and petty theft, police can capture suspects with warrants out for other crimes, as well as discourage criminals before they commit higher-level crimes.
- This strategy results in more short-term incarceration to discourage first-time offenders, and more long-term incarceration of serious criminals who are caught through this process.
- This approach proved especially successful in New York City.

Where are we now?

- This strategy can be implemented with existing officers, but it will create a need for additional jail space.
- Currently, the District jail is filled to capacity and the number of halfway house beds has been greatly reduced in past years because of budget pressures.

What more should we do?

- Increase the enforcement of low-level crimes.
- Contract with correctional facilities outside of the District in order to expand jail space and accommodate this increased enforcement.

What Are Our Goals?

As you evaluate these options, consider how each one will help the District to reach the following targets:

- Reduce property crime by 2 percent each year.
- Reduce violent crime by 2 percent each year.
- Reduce homicides by 2 percent each year.



ARE YOU PREPARED?

Mayor Williams created DC Citizen Corps to coordinate volunteer activities in support of local first responders during incidents of crime, terrorism, and disasters of all kinds. By volunteering through one of the seven Citizen Corps service opportunities, you will receive special training to help you keep your family and your neighborhood safe.

To learn more information about DC Citizen Corps, its volunteer programs, or to sign up as a volunteer, please contact the DC Commission on National and Community Service at (202) 727-7925, visit our website: www.cnscs.dc.gov; or visit our booth at the Citizen Summit today!



EXPANDING OPPORTUNITY FOR OUR RESIDENTS

In order to be full participants in our community and our economy, the residents of the District need to have their basic needs met. Most important among these are jobs, housing, and health care. A good job is the key to accessing other supports that a person needs. If DC residents are well prepared for the workplace and employers have incentives to hire them, then low-income residents can gain access to health care, housing, and other resources they may not have access to otherwise.

The District needs a sufficient amount of affordable and market-rate housing in order to expand its tax base, while ensuring that current District resident are able to remain in their communities. Finally, high quality access to health care must be made available to all residents, including the elderly and low-income populations, while addressing critical problems like infant mortality, substance abuse and AIDS.

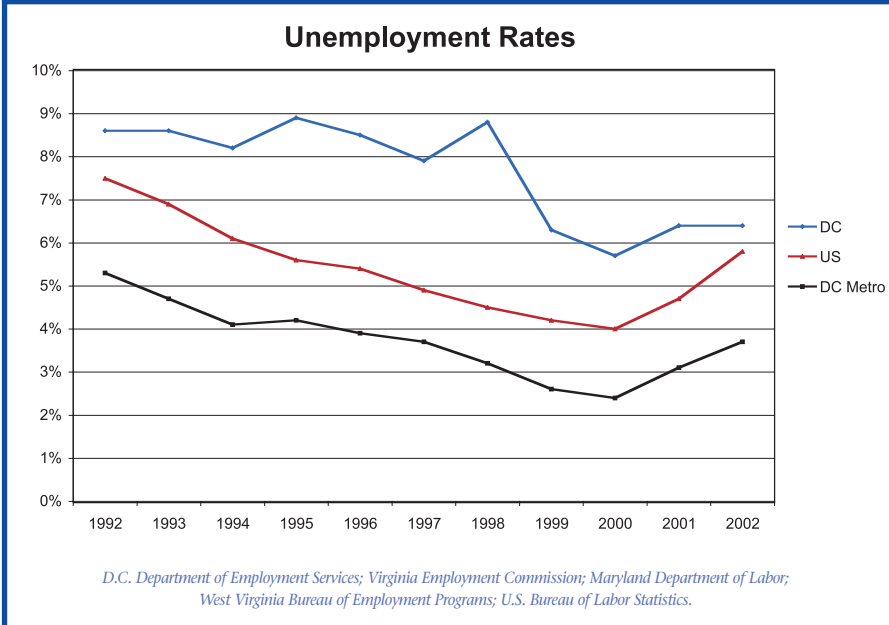
Job Opportunities

What Have We Accomplished So Far?

In order to determine where we want to go, it is useful to consider what we have accomplished so far. The following is a sample of achievements over the past several years:

- Job Growth:** Between 1998 and 2002, 49,000 new jobs were created in the District. During the same period, the number of District residents employed within the District increased by 29,000.
- Apprenticeship Opportunities:** A program was established to provide job training to District residents while they are employed on commercial construction sites.
- Job Training:** More than 3,000 individuals were placed in jobs through the CVS Pharmacy/South Capital Street One-Stop Training Center.
- Adult Literacy:** An adult literacy program was started that has funded and kept open 13 adult and family literacy programs and hired 20 Lifelong Learning Coaches.

A Statistical Comparison



Unemployment has dropped significantly since 1999 and has not risen as rapidly as the national average since 2000. However, employment levels in the District still lag behind the metropolitan area.

What Can Be Done to Increase Employment for DC Residents?

Option #1: Expand Adult Literacy Programs

Why is this option important?

- Basic reading and math skills are increasingly important for finding entry level jobs in today's job market.
- It is estimated that 37% of District residents lack sufficient reading ability to be fully employed at a living wage. Therefore, effective employment programs need to focus on basic literacy and math skills.

Where are we now?

- A variety of adult literacy programs are available in the District including the Department of Employment Services' One-Stop Career Center system, the Mobile One-Stop Career Center and its Welfare-to-Work program.
- Literacy programs were recently expanded to include 20 new literacy trainers and additional training sites.

What more should we do?

- Invest in several new One-Stop Career Centers in areas experiencing the heaviest flow of citizen demand for literacy services.
- Expand literacy training for young workers as they transition from middle and high school. This can be done through the summer youth employment program.

Option # 2: Increase Hiring of District Residents by Government Contractors

Why is this option important?

- Currently, businesses receiving District financing are required to hire a set percentage of District residents. This program has played a vital role in the District's economic growth by expanding employment opportunities for residents.

Where are we now?

- Business compliance with this requirement is currently being monitored, but enhancements to the monitoring program could make it more effective.
- In addition, the opportunity for hundreds of jobs for District residents are lost each year because non-profit organizations receiving District financing are exempted from having to hire District residents.

What more should we do?

- Strengthen and expand monitoring and compliance to ensure residents are being hired as mandated by law.
- Eliminate regulations that exempt non-profit organizations from hiring District residents.
- When possible, Tax Increment Financing development agreements (a particular type of District financing) should include job training provisions which would enhance the skills of residents and increase available job opportunities.

Option # 3: Strengthen the Job Apprenticeship System

Why is this option important?

- For many high school graduates, college is not a consideration. A direct linkage between schools to careers ensures that these individuals will be prepared to successfully transition from school to work through job apprenticeship programs.

Where are we now?

- A partnership is being formed between the public schools and the building trade unions, so that students can be qualified for apprenticeship opportunities after graduation.
- For example, a High School Apprenticeship Linkage Program has been developed between Calvin Coolidge High School and the electrical workers' union, exposing a limited number of students to the apprenticeship training system.

What more should we do?

- Expand the High School Apprenticeship Linkage Program, so that more students can participate.

- Create an apprenticeship program for young people to learn construction skills by working on school construction projects that use Federal funds so that they will have access to these lucrative apprenticeship opportunities.

What Are Our Goals?

As you evaluate these options, consider how each one will help the District to reach the following target:

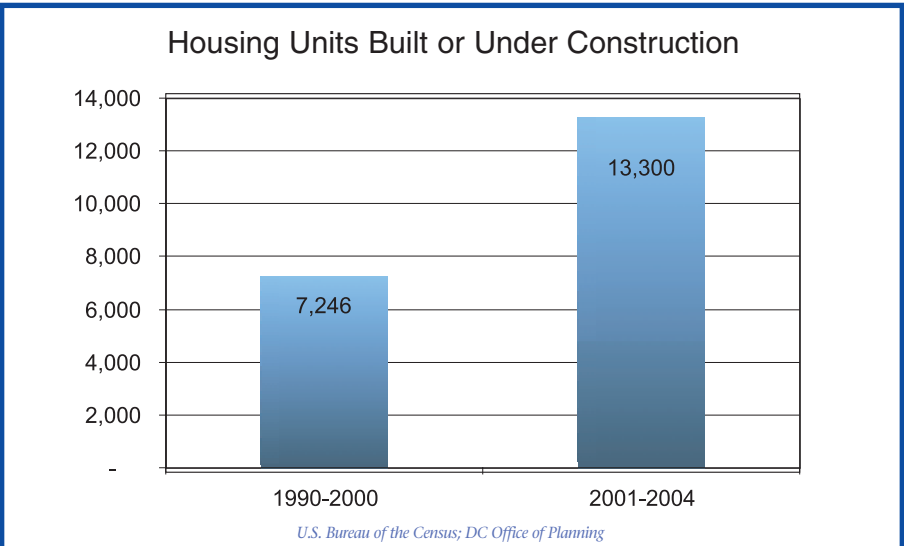
- Employ 3,500 additional residents in unsubsidized, private sector jobs each year

Housing

What Have We Accomplished So Far?

- **New Housing Units:** 13,300 housing units have been completed since 2001 or are under construction now. More housing units have been developed in the last 5 years than all of the previous decade.
- **Affordable Housing:** The District has helped finance more than 12,000 affordable housing units for projects totaling \$1.1 billion since 1999.

A Statistical Comparison



More housing units have been developed in the last 5 years than all of the previous decade.

What Can Be Done to Create More Housing Opportunities?

Option #1: Expand Housing Production to Support Growth of DC Population

Why is this option important?

- The Mayor has set a goal of increasing the city’s population by 100,000 residents in the next 10 years to increase the city’s tax base and keep the city financially viable.
- Housing units need to be developed at a fast pace to ensure that enough housing is available to all who want to move into the District.
- Unless the housing supply increases to meet the demands of new residents, a housing shortage will occur that will drive up housing costs.

Where are we now?

- 13,300 housing units (market rate and affordable) have been completed or are under construction since 2001.
- The Housing Act of 2002 was passed into law to ensure that affordable housing will be developed along with market rate housing.

What more should we do?

- Ensure that the sale of unused DC government property is used to produce housing units as part of the new development.
- Increase the density of housing near transportation corridors and Metro stops as part of the Transit Oriented Development initiative like Bethesda and Arlington.

Option #2: Support the Development of Affordable Housing Units

Why is this option important?

- With a possible housing shortage projected in the near future that would result in increased housing costs across the city, every effort needs to be taken to ensure continued access to affordable housing for residents with low and moderate incomes.
- Housing must be kept affordable to ensure long-time residents can remain in their neighborhoods.
- By making housing affordable to all, the District’s diversity will be maintained and the social fabric of the city will be preserved.

Where are we now?

- Current law requires that \$22.5 million be allocated to develop approximately 1,800 units of low-income housing each year.
- The District has helped finance more than 12,000 affordable housing units since 1999.
- Through the Home Again program, 732 abandoned and vacant properties were targeted as new home ownership opportunities.

What more should we do?

- Fund initiatives that increase tax credits for affordable housing and assist disadvantaged new home owners to buy a house.
- Provide additional funding to the Housing Production Trust Fund to develop more affordable housing units across the city.
- Pass a law that would require all new housing development to include affordable units.

Option #3: Develop Housing for Residents with Special Needs

Why is this option important?

- The city must address the housing needs of residents with special needs, including those who are elderly, orphaned, developmentally disabled, mentally ill or adjudicated youth.
- Supportive services must be coordinated with housing, so that the quality of residents’ lives will improve, while maintaining the social fabric of the communities in which they live.



Where are we now?

- The District is building hundreds of affordable and scattered site housing units across the city to replace aging and unfit group homes, and expand services for special needs populations.
- The city has acquired a new facility on New York Avenue that will provide housing assistance and supportive services for the homeless.
- Nine apartment buildings with 144 units were renovated to provide housing for residents with special needs.
- Two pieces of land – one in Columbia Heights and one on the north edge of downtown – have been given to the District government to house formerly homeless city residents.

What more should we do?

- Produce stable, affordable housing options for very low-income city residents.
- Develop Homelessness Assistance Centers to offer emergency shelter, placement into housing and supportive services for homeless city residents.

- Expand the development of supportive housing for residents with special needs.

What Are Our Goals?

As you evaluate these options, consider how each one will help the District to reach the following target:

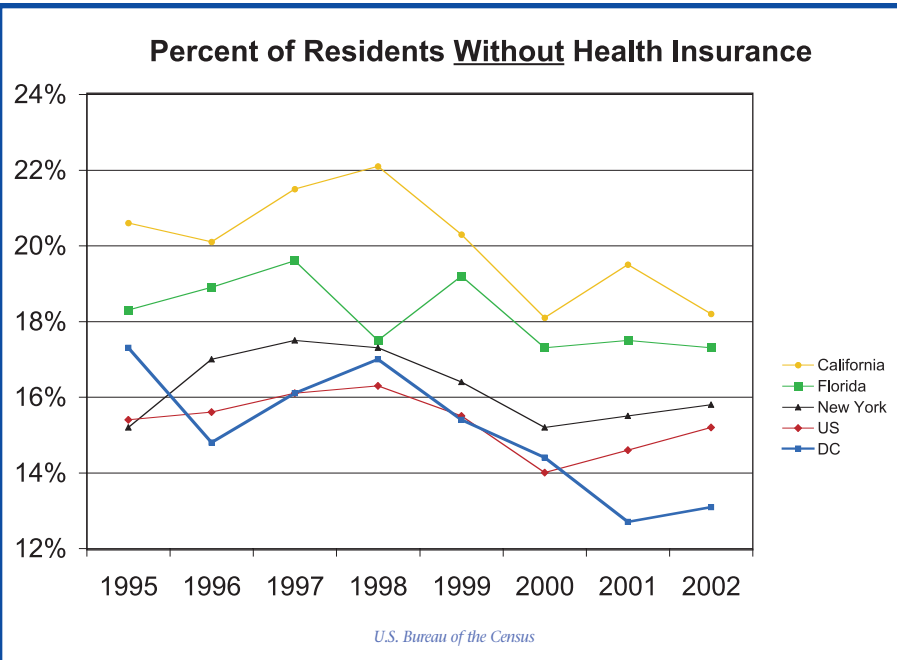
- Provide funding for construction assistance for 200 new multifamily and single family affordable housing units.
- Provide funding to rehabilitate 1,308 existing multifamily and single family affordable housing units.
- Provide funding for construction assistance and the rehabilitation of 650 multifamily and single family housing units.

Health Care

What Have We Accomplished So Far?

- **Health Insurance for low-income residents:** The number of District residents who are uninsured has dropped from 17 percent to 13 percent over the past five years. The District has fewer uninsured residents than the national average.
- **Infant Mortality:** While the District’s infant mortality rate remains high, it declined by 28 percent from 1999 to 2001.
- **Out-of-Wedlock Births:** The number of out-of-wedlock births in the District fell by 5.5 percent between 1998 and 2001 – one of the largest declines in the country.
- **HIV/AIDS:** The Department of Health provided housing to 274 residents living with HIV/AIDS in 2003, and will increase that number by 15% by the end of 2005. During the 2003 fiscal year, approximately 1,600 clients received HIV drugs from the District.
- **Substance Abuse:** The Drug Treatment Choice Program provides individuals with a choice of 14 community-based treatment providers. The Family Treatment Court was also created, allowing women to stay with their children while receiving substance abuse treatment. Additionally, the city’s first Citywide Comprehensive Substance Abuse Strategy was developed.

A Statistical Comparison



The number of uninsured has dropped significantly and is lower than the national average. However, rising health care costs are increasing pressure to scale back public services for those without private insurance.

What Can Be Done to Improve Health Care?

Option #1: Expand Health Care for the Uninsured

Why is this option important?

- Without health insurance, low-income residents often forego doctor visits and instead use emergency rooms once their illnesses have become serious.
- As a result, these residents suffer more serious illnesses, and the cost to government, families, and communities is much greater than if they had accessed preventive care.

Where are we now?

- The District provides health insurance to very low-income residents through the federal Medicaid program.
- The DC Healthy Families program allows children, their parents and caretakers who earn up to twice the federal poverty level to access doctors and services as with a private insurance plan. The DC HealthCare Alliance provides health care services to uninsured residents who do not qualify for Medicaid.
- Rising health care costs are increasing the burden of supporting the healthcare needs of residents. Funding for healthcare will need to be increased by the District just to maintain current levels of coverage.

What more should we do?

- Obtain funding to cover the rising costs of health care for the current number of insured people.
- Expand health care coverage to those who remain uninsured through improved outreach and education to those eligible for local and federal programs and an increasing emphasis on prevention and early detection, to address health concerns as early as possible.

Option #2: Plan for Expanded Services for the Aging Population

Why is this option important?

- Across the nation our population is getting older and living longer, requiring major new investments in health care. In order to serve our older residents and manage the huge escalation of costs, every state must begin careful planning and service development now.

Where are we now?

- Aging baby boomers are the largest growing population group and seniors over 75 are the third largest growing population group. In the next few years, the District will face a significantly larger group of citizens over the age of 60.
- Currently, the District provides a network of senior wellness centers, two nursing homes, and publicly funded health care through Medicaid and Medicare to seniors.
- Like the rest of the nation, the District is currently experiencing major financial pressures in providing services for the elderly and other groups in need of publicly subsidized health care – especially in the area of prescription drug costs.

What more should we do?

- Fund a plan to provide appropriate services to our older residents in the coming years that reviews assessments and projections for senior wellness centers, plans for nursing homes and in-home care, and the development of measures to prevent cost overruns.
- Fund education and outreach for preventive care to help seniors maintain vitality and prevent or detect illnesses before they become serious.



Option #3: Reduce Infant Mortality and Cases of Low-Birth-Weight Babies

- Why is this option important?*
- Poor health care for expectant mothers and poor health choices often result in low-birth weights or death for new born babies.
 - To address this issue there must be greater attention to education and better choices for expectant parents, as well as comprehensive screening and ongoing care for at-risk families and children.

- Where are we now?*
- The District’s infant mortality rate declined by 28 percent from 1999 to 2001, but it still remains relatively high at 81 deaths per 1,000 live births.
 - While the District is showing a steady decline in the number of low birth weight babies (15.1% to 11.9%), it still has one of the highest rates in the nation.

- What more should we do?*
- Increase education, outreach, and prevention programs related to expectant parents at high risk of having low-birth-weight babies or other poor health outcomes.
 - Partner with local hospitals to provide screening and services to high risk infants, home visits by public health nurses, free transportation for medical follow-up visits, and extra support for drug-exposed infants.

Option #4: Increase Prevention and Treatment for HIV and AIDS

- Why is this option important?*
- HIV and AIDS are an epidemic that affect a large number of people, particularly in minority and low-income communities. Recently, the largest increases are documented in youth and women. Without effective prevention and treatment, this disease can result in major loss of life and major financial pressures for the city, families, and communities.

- Where are we now?*
- In 2003, approximately 3.8% of the District’s population (or 20,000 people) were diagnosed with HIV or AIDS.
 - The District provides education, outreach, prevention campaigns, testing, treatment, medications and housing for thousands of residents each year, but significantly more needs to be done as the need and numbers continue to increase.

- What more should we do?*
- Increase outreach to members of high-risk groups to make them feel safe to pursue testing and treatment to reduce the spread of the disease – focusing especially on youth and women.
 - Increase the availability of medication and housing support.

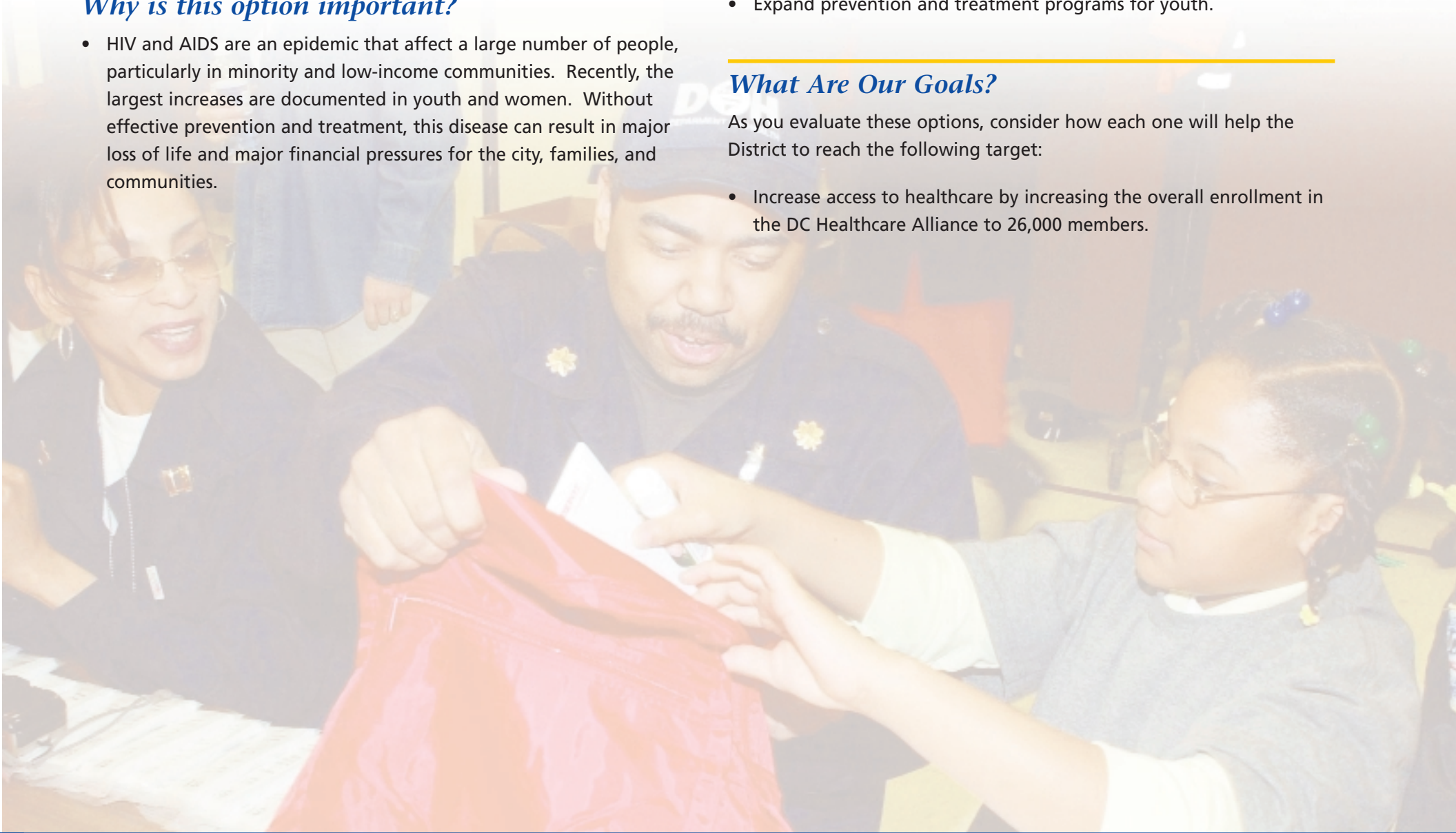
Option #5: Expand Substance Abuse Treatment and Prevention

- Why is this option important?*
- Substance abuse is a disease that not only has human costs, but also contributes to crime, family breakdown, and all the financial and social costs that accompany those ills.
 - Effective substance abuse prevention and treatment is critical to ensure community and family safety and health.

- Where are we now?*
- The Drug Treatment Choice Program was created in 2002 to provide a choice of 14 providers for individuals who need substance abuse treatment.
 - A Family Treatment Court has been created to keep families intact while mothers undergo drug treatment and rehabilitation
 - The District recently released a comprehensive substance abuse plan that includes multiple strategies for reducing drug abuse.

- What more should we do?*
- Increase prevention programs, treatment slots and voucher options, and expand the Family Treatment Court.
 - Expand prevention and treatment programs for youth.

- What Are Our Goals?*
- As you evaluate these options, consider how each one will help the District to reach the following target:
- Increase access to healthcare by increasing the overall enrollment in the DC Healthcare Alliance to 26,000 members.



Executive Office of Neighborhood Action

The Executive Office of Neighborhood Action works to connect the District government directly to its residents, bringing neighbors together and giving them a voice in setting priorities for the city and the communities they call home.

Neighborhood Action is committed to engaging all levels of the community including Advisory Neighborhood Commissions, faith groups, community based organizations, and our local business leaders. As a next step, we are looking forward to beginning a new initiative that re-invigorates our city's long history of vibrant block club organizations.

Our next step in Neighborhood Action furthers our commitment to engaging all levels of the community including Advisory Neighborhood Commissions, faith groups, community based organizations, and our local business leaders.

Neighborhood Action would like to thank the Citizen Summit III Advisory Board and the following partner organizations for their generous support of Citizen Summit III; Fannie Mae Foundation, Wachovia Bank and the Calvert Group.



Beverley R. Wheeler, Ed.D., Executive Director

To learn more about Neighborhood Action, please visit us online at: www.neighborhoodaction.dc.gov, send an email to: neighborhoodaction@dc.gov, or contact us by phone at: **202-727-2822**.

Neighborhood Services

Neighborhood Services work closely with citizens and Core Teams - representing 16 key government agencies - to solve problems that require more than one government agency. One neighborhood services coordinator works in each ward of the city and acts as the point-of-contact for the community, quickly becoming the District's "expert" on Ward services and coordinates the resolution of recurring problems in targeted areas. These problems range from high-crime areas and safety hazards to abandoned buildings and code violations.

Neighborhood Planning

Neighborhood Planning focuses planning efforts on residents' vision for their neighborhoods. Just as the city needs a plan, each neighborhood needs a plan to ensure that its priorities are met and unique qualities are preserved. One neighborhood planning coordinator works in each ward of the city to coordinate the development of Strategic Neighborhood Action Plans (SNAPs), and the combined ideas of adjacent neighborhoods.

Office of Community Outreach

The Office of Community Outreach ensures continuous, open communication between District residents and the Executive Office of the Mayor. The Office conducts and coordinates events, town halls, forums, and other special projects.

D.C. Commission on National and Community Service

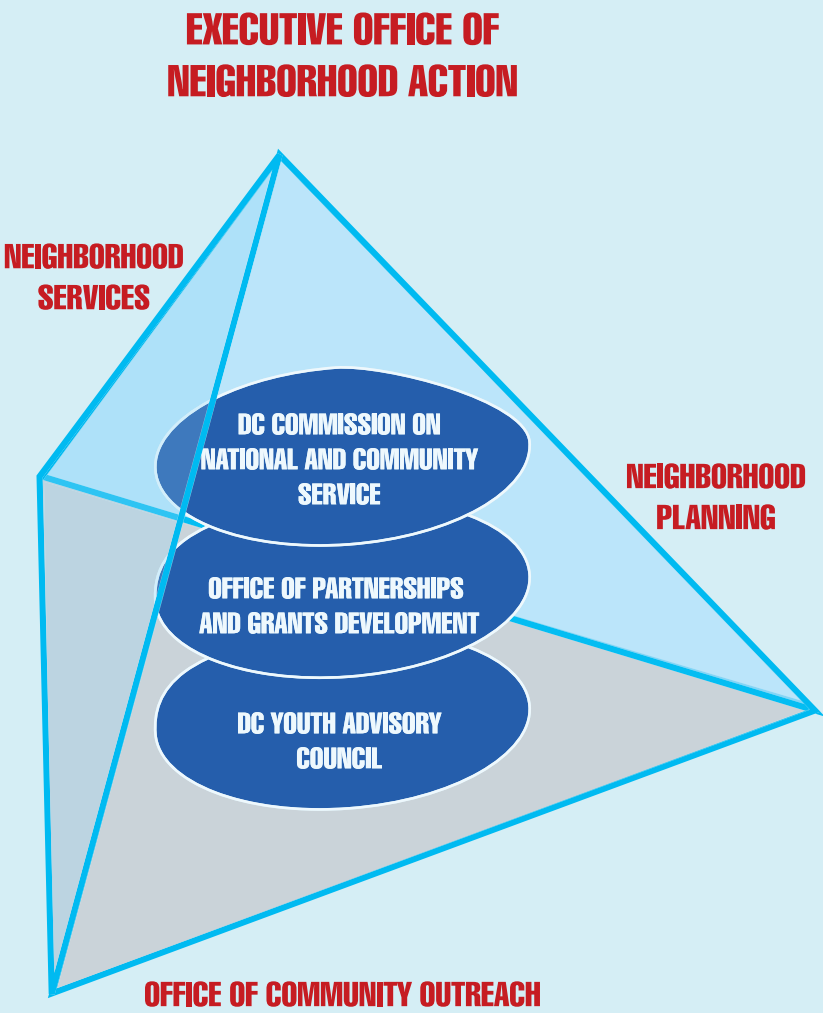
The mission of the DCNCS is to strengthen and promote the District of Columbia's spirit of service through partnerships, volunteerism, and national service. Through local nonprofits, schools, religious organizations and other groups, residents tutor and mentor children, coordinate after-school programs, build homes, organize neighborhood watch groups, clean parks, recruit volunteers, and accomplish other tasks as defined by communities.

Office of Partnership and Grants Development

The Office of Partnerships and Grants Development advances the District's strategic plan and improves the quality of life for residents of our nation's capital by establishing partnerships between public and private, for-profit and non-profit organizations, and pursuing financial support and technical assistance from public and private sources.

D.C. Youth Advisory Council

The D.C. Youth Advisory Council is comprised of 32 representatives who include young leaders from the city's wards, the juvenile justice system and foster care. The council comments on legislation and policies that affect young people, presents issues and recommendations to improve the lives of young people, partners with neighborhood youth organizations on shared issues, and conducts workshops for youth and adults.



Next Steps

Following Citizen Summit III, Mayor Williams and his cabinet will analyze input collected from the public and refine the Citywide Strategic Plan to reflect the public's feedback. A report on the results of the Summit will be available on the Neighborhood Action web site.

In a few months, a follow-up Neighborhood Action Forum will bring Citizen Summit participants back together to review how input from the Summit has impacted policy and budget proposals and continue the process of setting the city's priorities.

Stay tuned for the date and location of the follow-up to Citizen Summit III at www.neighborhoodaction.dc.gov.

AmericaSpeaks: Engaging Citizens in Governance

One of the critical challenges the nation faces early in the 21st century is the decline of meaningful citizen participation on important issues before us. AmericaSpeaks was founded to create new democratic mechanisms that reflect the realities of the new millennium so that citizens can once again participate authentically and trust fundamentally in the policy decisions made in their names to solve their problems. Through innovative and large-scale 21st Century Town Meetings™, AmericaSpeaks gives ordinary Americans a meaningful voice in the development of local, state and national policies. For more information, visit www.americaspeaks.org.